

Statement on Senator Jesse Helms' Decision Not To Seek Reelection  
August 22, 2001

The Senate is losing an institution with the decision of Jesse Helms to retire after three decades of distinguished public service. Senator Helms went to Washington but never became a part of Washington. He has always remained true to his conservative principles and to the people of North Carolina who elected him five times. Senator Helms is a true gentleman, known for treating his colleagues with the utmost respect and courtesy, regardless of party or policy differences.

As chairman and ranking Republican of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Helms has been a tireless defender of our Nation's freedom and a champion of democracy abroad. When Senator Helms retires, the Senate will have lost a respected leader, but I have no doubt we will continue to seek his counsel as a senior statesman.

Laura and I extend our best wishes to Jesse, his wife, Dot, and the entire Helms family.

Exchange With Reporters in Waco, Texas  
August 23, 2001

*President's Schedule*

*The President.* Good morning. I'll see you all at the school.

*Q.* Uh-oh, what does that mean?

*The President.* In Crawford.

*Q.* For what?

*Q.* You're going to drop by?

*The President.* I'm going to drop by the school after, so we'll have a little chance to visit then, to thank them for letting you all stay at the elementary school. Obviously, nobody told you.

*Q.* Thanks for the heads up.

*The President.* We're going to have an impromptu stop. I will decide on my way home to stop by the school. [*Laughter*]

Roland Betts, my good friend from New York City.

Let's go. Hit them up.

And we'll—we can have a little visit there, if you like. That way, it won't ruin my golf game. [*Laughter*]

*Q.* Looking forward to your game?

*The President.* Yes, I'm looking forward to getting out here.

Had a nice visit with Mitch Daniels this morning.

*Q.* He down here?

*The President.* No, I called him.

*Q.* Is that a Masters souvenir, your glove?

*The President.* I think somebody must have sent me that. I haven't been there in a while. Beautiful course.

All right, excuse me.

[*At this point, the President played a round of golf.*]

*President's Round of Golf*

*The President.* So, I won't be a professional golfer.

*Q.* I'm going to go find that ball. I'm going to find that one.

*The President.* The first one? If you can find that first one, you're a pretty good bird-dog. [*Laughter*]

Is everybody enjoying themselves here?

*Q.* I only just got here, so—

*The President.* Yes, I know. Where have you been?

Q. Sucking up the salt air on the west coast.

*The President.* Brie and cheese?

Q. No, tennis.

*The President.* Okay.

NOTE: The exchange began at 7:27 a.m. at the Ridgewood Country Club. In his remarks, the President referred to Roland Betts, owner, Chelsea Piers, L.P. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Students at Crawford Elementary School and an Exchange With Reporters in Crawford, Texas  
*August 23, 2001*

*The President.* Thank you, Linda. Thanks for having me come. It's—what I thought I would do is just say a few words and maybe answer some of the questions—some questions from some of the boys and girls here, if you have any.

First, thanks for inviting me, Linda, and thanks for being so patient. And also, thank you all for hosting the national press corps. [*Laughter*] I know they've appreciated it very much, and on their behalf, I would like to thank them. They are, most of the time, well behaved. But they're an important part of our country, because in order for people to be able to know what's going on, they report the news. Sometimes they exaggerate; sometimes they don't. But they're an important part of our democracy. And I appreciate so very much you welcoming them here into your school.

I want to thank all the teachers who are here. Teaching is a noble profession, and we can't say enough good words about the teachers, not only here in Crawford but in Texas and across America. So thank you very much for being a teacher.

I want to thank the parents who are here. You're right, some of the sweetest—one of the sweetest words in our vocabulary is "mom." And my advice to you is, listen to your mother. [*Laughter*] That's about as good advice as a fellow can give, because your mom always has good advice.

I want to ask you a couple of questions. Do any of you read more than you watch TV?

*Students.* Yes.

*The President.* Well, that's important. The reason I asked that question is, it's so easy to watch TV, and it's hard to read. But you need to do it the other way around. You need to read more than you watch TV, because when you get to be a good reader, and I know you will be, it makes learning so much easier. And then when you learn a lot of things, it helps you realize your dreams.

And let me ask you this question. Some of you are too young to have probably thought about this question, but some of the older kids, how many of you dream about going to college?

[*At this point, the students indicated their interest in college.*]

*The President.* Oh, that's great. That means you'd better practice reading. That means you'd better read more than you watch TV if you want to achieve that goal. That means you've set a goal, right? That's what that is. You've set a goal, and now you're going to work hard to achieve the goal.

A couple of other points I want make, and then I'd be glad to answer some questions. In order to go to college or to realize your dreams, you have to make right choices in life. As you grow up, you've got